



Sixty Years of Deaf Education in Ghana (1957-2017)

Samuel Frimpong Amoako*

University of Roehampton, Roehampton, London, United Kingdom

Abstract

Background: This article provides an overview of deaf education efforts in Ghana over the past 60 years (1957–2018). It describes the field’s pioneering history from a global perspective to the local content (in Ghana) after national independence in 1957 led by the efforts of Dr Andrew Foster between the 1950s and the 1960s. It also provides an overview of the significant issues that negatively impact deaf education in Ghana, such as political turnover, limited political will, funding issues, and limited research and awareness of the needs of deaf children within the broader population of deaf students.

Methodology: This article uses published articles, books, reports, and the author’s personal experiences and knowledge of deaf education to document the deaf education issues in Ghana. The articles, books, and reports that formed the core of this write-up were selected from published books, journals, and peer-reviewed articles authored between 1970 and 2018.

Results: The review provides important literature on the deaf education efforts in Ghana. It also documents facts and information about the deaf education system in Ghana that can be used by students, academicians, practitioners, and researchers in Ghana and the diaspora.

Conclusion: Good governance, relevant education policies, and a continuation in national policy that needs to exist despite changes in political administrations are important to help to improve the deaf education system in Ghana.

Keywords: Ghana; Deaf education; Ghanaian sign language; Andrew foster

Introduction

Globally, Inclusive Education (IE) is considered a form of education that seeks to remove educational access barriers that disabled people face and is an integral part of Article 24 of the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPWD). Ghana has a population of 29 million (World Population Review, 2019) and was the first African country south of the Sahara to attain independence from the British colonial rule in 1957. As a country, Ghana is a signatory to the CRPWD and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals but has yet to implement IE [1].

Deaf education is an integral part of IE and seeks to provide educational and support services to deaf students enrolled in mainstream and special school classes. Mainstream classes offer educational services to both disabled and non-disabled students, while special classes provide educational and support services for a particular group of disable person(s). The support services for deaf students in mainstream classes may cover manual and electronic note-taking, sign language interpretation support, and one-to-one (1:1) tuition support, among others. Deaf education is among one of the oldest forms of special education and was started in the late 16th century in western nations such as France, Germany, Britain, and the USA before missionary activities and colonization brought it to the continent of Africa.

Historically, it has been believed that deaf education first started in Spain in the 16th century [2,3] at a time when Spain was one of the most influential and wealthiest countries in the world. During that time in Spain, wealthy families maintained their wealth; for example, through intermarriages between cousins to preserve and sustain family properties [4]. In the 1500s, a wealthy family known as the Velasco family had two deaf sons and several deaf daughters who could not read nor write and were concerned they might not be able to make future wills in writing. During those days, there were some monks in Spain known

as the Benedictine monk. They had a system of signs and fingerspelling which they used during religious rites of vows. Later on, in the 16th century, a hearing Spanish Benedictine monk called Fray Melchor de Yebra published an illustrated manual fingerspelling chart similar to the one used by the Benedictine monks [3]. The published system of signs became popular and influenced many of the one-handed fingerspelling methods in Europe and North America. Determined to educate their deaf children, the Velasco family contracted a tutor called Ponce de Leon to teach their children. Pedro Ponce de Leon taught the deaf children of the Velasco family and later went on to publish one of the first books of signs [5]. With the help of the Velasco family, he started a school for the deaf with the deaf children of the Velasco family as his students [4]. Spain played an essential role in documenting a manual alphabet. However, they are not regarded as the global pioneers of deaf education because the school started by the Velasco family might not have been formally recognized globally until 1805 that a school for the deaf was eventually established in Spain [6].

Following the documentation of the one-handed sign language manual alphabet in Spain, a French clergyman and Priest, Abbe Charles-Michel de l’Epee, (1712-1789) led the pioneering of deaf education in France from 1755 by establishing the first world public school for deaf children, the National Institution for Deaf-Mutes in Paris in 1760. l’Epee was a priest who had worked for 25 years and taught twin deaf sisters religious education before establishing the school. The school he

***Corresponding author:** Samuel Frimpong Amoako, University of Roehampton, Roehampton, London, United Kingdom, E-mail: frimpons@roehampton.ac.uk, frimpons@outlook.com

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established used sign language for communication and instruction, and he is regarded as the founder of a signed-based pedagogy [2,7].

The next country from the west after France to institutionalize deaf education was Germany, and this pioneering effort was led by Samuel Heinicke (1727-1790) [2]. Heinicke established an oral-based school for the deaf in Leipzig, Germany, in 1778. He is regarded as the founder of oral-based pedagogy [2,7] as compared to l'Epee, who is considered to be the founder of the sign-based pedagogy. It was reported [8] that Heinicke kept his teaching methods secret as he believed such methods should not be given away for free.

After Germany, Britain became the next country to introduce deaf education in its educational system. Thomas Braidwood opened the first school for the deaf in Britain known as the Academy for the Deaf and Dumb in Edinburgh in the early 1760s. However, it was not fully accessible to the general public, just to a few elite [9]. In 1783, it was relocated to London before being officially opened to the public in 1792 under the name of the 'Asylum for the Support and Education of the Deaf and Dumb Children'. It was the third free school for deaf children in the world in the 1790s. Today, the school is known as the Royal School for Deaf Children [10].

Regarding the United States of America (the USA or simply the US), deaf education was pioneered by a combined effort of Thomas Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc in the early 1800s. Bravin [11], the director of the first school for the deaf established in the US (the American School for the Deaf), in a presentation writing on the past, present, and future of deaf education in America on the history of deaf provided a certain historical account of deaf education in the US. The report he provided was similar to that of Low (1988), particularly the chapter documenting the history of language use in the education of the deaf in the US. According to Bravin [11], the quest to pioneer deaf education in the US began in 1815 when a prominent physician with a deaf daughter (named Alice) held a meeting with Thomas Gallaudet and the other leaders within the Hartford community where he was based. At the meeting, they agreed to establish a school for the deaf and raised funds to send Thomas Gallaudet to Europe to learn about deaf education and its methods of teaching [12]. In Europe, Gallaudet first went to the Braidwood Academy in England in 1815. However, he was frustrated and had a strained relationship with the academy, because they were secretive with their pedagogical approaches and methods, imposed limitations on what he could learn, wanted him to train as an apprentice for several years and to keep the methods of what he learns a secret [3]. The instruction for Gallaudet to keep what he learns secret might have been because of the profit motive of the industrialization of deaf education [8]. Fortunately, Gallaudet met the Director of the French Institute for the Deaf, Abbe Sicard who invited him to be his student and learn how the French educated their deaf students. At the French Institute for the Deaf, Gallaudet made friends with one of the teachers, Laurent Clerc. Van Cleve & Crouch [3] recounted that in France; Gallaudet faced financial difficulties and witnessed cultural discrimination to the shock of his life. This economic hardship promoted him to reconsider returning to the US. In 1816, Clerc volunteered to go with Gallaudet to the US [3] to open a school for the deaf. Eventually, in 1817, the first school for the deaf in the US was co-founded by Gallaudet and Clerc and was known as the Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons (now called American School for the Deaf). The school used American Sign Language (ASL) as a medium of instruction. ASL was created from French Sign Language brought to the US by ASD's co-founder, Laurent Clerc, a combination of signs used by deaf natives from an island with

a significant deaf population (Martha's Vineyard), and signs developed by the early students of the first school established by Gallaudet and Clerc [11].

As explained in the previous paragraphs, deaf education pioneered in the western world among developed nations such as Spain, France, Germany, Britain, and the USA. From there, it reached Africa through colonialism and missionary activities. For example, in South Africa, the Irish Dominican Catholic order of nuns and the Dutch Reformed Church led the pioneering of deaf education in the 1860s. The Irish Dominican nuns back then were under the leadership of Thomas Grimley, and they established the first school for the deaf in Cape Town in 1863. The school was known as the Dominican Grimley Institute for the Deaf and was open to people of all races. It used sign language as a medium of instruction. The Irish Dominican sisters used Irish signs and the one-handed Irish alphabet, while the German Dominican sisters followed German signs and the two-handed European alphabet [13].

Similar to South Africa, the first school for the deaf in Zimbabwe, the Henry Murray School was opened in 1948 through the efforts of a Dutch Reformed missionary who came across a deaf child at a nearby station the year before [14]. Note that the pioneering of deaf education in African countries such as South Africa and Zimbabwe had missionary influences and that the situation was no different from Ghana.

In Ghana, Andrew Jackson Foster (1927-1987), an American black deaf graduate of Gallaudet University led the pioneering of deaf education in Ghana [1]. Foster first arrived in Accra, Ghana (West Africa), in 1957, the year Ghana gained independence from the colonial rule. He established the first deaf school in West Africa at Osu, Accra, Ghana. The school was called the Ghana Mission School for the Deaf [1,12]. The school was the first in Africa to use manual communication [15].

Methodology

This article uses published articles, books, reports, and the author's personal experiences and knowledge of deaf education to document the deaf education issues in Ghana. The articles, books, and reports that formed the core of this write-up were selected from published books, journals, and peer-reviewed articles authored between 1970 and 2018. The rationale for conducting the review is to provide literature on the brief pioneering history of deaf education and to highlight the present situation and some challenges facing the deaf education in Ghana in the commemoration of sixty years (1957-2017) of deaf education provision in Ghana. This review will help fill some literature gaps about deaf education in Ghana and provide historical facts and information that can be used by students, academicians, and researchers in Ghana and the diaspora.

Brief history of the development of deaf education in Ghana

From the colonial era to post-independence: Formal education started in Ghana in 1844 upon the arrival of European merchants, who came to trade and engage in evangelism [16]. In spite of the fact that Ghana was under the colonial rule at that time, the colonial masters paid little or no attention to special education (e.g. deaf education), even though it was already being practiced in the western world since the late 1790s. With respect to the deaf education in Ghana, missionary factors played a crucial role [16]. Andrew Foster, who pioneered deaf education in Ghana, was himself a missionary engaged in charitable work [17]. His philanthropic work started in the US, where he founded the Christian Mission for Deaf Africans (now known as the Christian Mission for the Deaf) in 1956 in Detroit [12,15]. Through the Christian

Mission for the Deaf, he embarked on speaking tours throughout the US [18], Canada, Mexico, Western Europe, and 25 African nations to raise funds to establish schools for the deaf in different African countries [12].

Carroll and Mather [19], while documenting deaf people who changed the world, described Foster as a strong, tall man approximately six feet in height. Panara and Panara [20], writing about the great deaf Americans, described Foster as a charismatic and appealing man. This characteristics and charitable nature of Foster might have won him many friends upon his arrival in Ghana, which enabled him to discover the oppression that some young deaf children experienced, such as engaging in child labor to feed themselves, in addition to discovering that an unknown number of deaf people in Ghana were illiterate and without any language [18]. He also found out that the education system in Ghana had no schools, (apart from the one he established), programs, or teachers for the deaf students [15].

Foster's missionary and charitable work was reported by Oteng [17] who stated that Foster frequently visited Adamorobe to preach to the deaf and distribute goods [17]. His introduction of deaf education through missionary work upon his arrival in 1957 helped to rid the streets of Accra of deaf children who were fending for themselves. Indeed, the fact that Christianity played a vital role in the development of deaf education in Ghana cannot be overlooked. Following the establishment of the first deaf school in Ghana by Foster in 1957, the then ruling government placed a high value on education. The government enacted the 1961 Education Act, which made education for all children of school age free and compulsory [21]. Then, in early 1960, the government contracted a UK educationist, Sir John Wilson, to assist with the identification and categorization of disabled persons for national planning to make provisions for the 100,000 persons with disabilities in the population of 6 million [22]. Free compulsory formal children's education was made possible by the Education Act of 1961 and Article 32(8) of the 1992 constitution, which emphasized the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) for all persons of school age [23]. Although they seemed to make education accessible to all children, these two significant reforms fell short of covering children with disabilities and special needs [24,25]. Thus, no changes were made to the society, educational system, or school culture [23], resulting in schools not practicing true inclusive education, but just integration [22]. Presently, all deaf schools in Ghana at the Primary and JHS levels are segregated in addition to the only one Senior High School (SHS) for the deaf.

Despite the fact that access to education for deaf students is segregated at the primary and secondary levels, deaf persons do have access to tertiary integrated and mainstream education. However, the provision of free education at all levels for persons living with disabilities [26] and the establishment of new schools for those whose disabilities impede their enrolment in regular schools have not been realized. Deaf students pay fees at the tertiary level, which highlights that the past and the successive governments have paid less attention to people with disabilities, in addition to inclusive educational policies and their enactment.

Schools for the deaf in Ghana: Dr Andrew Foster established the first school for the deaf in Ghana at Osu, Accra, in 1957. The school used manual communication and started with 24 students, including 13 deaf children and 11 deaf adults [18]. The manual communication system Foster brought from the US and used to teach at the school, later on, became known as American Sign Language (ASL). Today, Ghana's deaf

people have their own sign language called Ghanaian Sign Language (GhSL). This language is a system of gestures, facial expressions, hand shapes, body movements, and lip patterns (non-oral) used as a medium of communication by the deaf people in Ghana. GhSL as a system of manual communication did not originate from Andrew Foster contrary to earlier claims by [18]. The deaf people in Ghana in a village called Adamorobe had their sign language before Foster's arrival in 1957. The available literature evidence to debunk [18] claim was provided by [27,28] and [29], both of whom found that the deaf people in Adamorobe in the South-Eastern part of Ghana used Adamorobe Sign Language (AdaSL) long before Foster came with ASL. According to Kusters [29], in an ethnography study that also documented the history of the deaf community of Adamorobe, 'the deaf people in Adamorobe [a village in Ghana] communicated with Foster by teaching him their AdaSL signs, and, in exchange, he taught them ASL' [1]. She further stated that even though some of Foster's former students offered ASL church services in Adamorobe, they did so through a 'mutual exchange of signs' that included the use of AdaSL and continued to use ASL instead of the traditional AdaSL [1]. The lack of earlier written records about traditional African education or sign language for the deaf in Ghana before Foster's arrival might have resulted from the lack of written record-keeping, as some parts of Africa relied on oral history in the past.

As explained in the previous paragraph, Foster's school used manual sign language for communication, and it expanded to accommodate 53 deaf students [20] through the publicity campaigns that he initiated. Foster taught classes to deaf children between 4 pm and 5 pm and a basic education class for deaf education from 6 pm to 7 pm [20]. In January 1958, the school relocated to the Akuapem Hills with an initial strength of 80 deaf children and adults [12]. That same academic year, more than 100 deaf students enrolled at the school with several hundred on the waiting list. Foster looked for a larger facility to accommodate the enrolment increase for deaf education in Ghana [18]. Fortunately, in January 1959, his school received a generous donation of land and a building between Mampong and Tutu from the Chief of Mampong-Akuapem, Mamponghe Nana Anobaa Sarsaku II, which allowed Foster to establish a permanent residential school [12,18]. Foster, therefore, relocated the school to its present site at Mampong-Akuapem in 1959 and served as the school's director until 1965 [1,18]. However, improper record-keeping in Ghana has highlighted 1964 as the date of establishment of the school instead of 1957, which was before its relocation. The school is referred to as the 'Mother' of all deaf schools in Ghana and is presently known as 'Demonstration School for the Deaf (DemoDeaf)' and is situated at Mampong-Akuapem in the eastern region of Ghana.

By 1960, Foster had handed over both the Ghana Mission School for the Deaf and the Ghana Mission Centre for Deaf Adults and Youth to the Ghana Ministry of Education [18]. This handing over might be attributed to missionary duties in other African countries and to the fact that he was planning to marry his deaf German girlfriend, Berta, whom he met at the Third World Congress of the Deaf in Wiesbaden, Germany, in 1959 and married in 1961. Foster and Bertha had four sons and a daughter, namely Andrew, John, Tim, Dan, and Faith, respectively [12].

The Ghana Ministry of Education, however, retained Foster to continue training deaf teachers and administrators at the Ghana Mission School for the Deaf, which was the first deaf education teacher training program in Africa [1]. It is worth noting that, Foster did not establish all the ten schools for the deaf in Ghana by the end of 1986,

as perceived by some writers such as Nyst [27] cited in Kusters (2015) [29] and the deaf people of Adamorobe who addressed schools for the deaf in different geographical locations as 'Foster-school-here' (while Mampong is known as 'Foster-school-over-there' [29]).

Instead, Foster served on the Ghana Government Cabinet Committee in 1960 and played the lead role that led to the establishment of eight more schools for the deaf in Ghana (Carroll & Mather) [19] in 1978. Foster founded and established two deaf schools in Ghana, namely the Ghana Mission School for the Deaf (presently known as Demonstration School for the Deaf) and the Ghana Mission Centre for Deaf Adults (present status is unknown to this writer and it is likely to be among some of the 31 deaf schools that he established in 13 African countries, which were closed down). The additional eight deaf schools established between 1957 and 1975 includes Sekondi School for the Deaf, Ho School for the Deaf, Cape Coast School for the Deaf, Kibi School for the Deaf, Koforidua School for the Deaf, Mampong Senior High Technical for the Deaf, Bechem School for the Deaf, and Wa School for the Deaf.

The process for this establishment of additional eight deaf schools' started in 1974, when three other schools for the deaf (excluding the state schools for the deaf founded by Seth Ocloo, a student graduate of Foster's school in 1965) were established in 1970 and 1971 (two schools that year) through initiatives led by Foster during and after his service on the Ghana government's cabinet. These new schools' establishment brought the total number of deaf schools in Ghana to five in 1973, namely Seth Ocloo School for the Deaf (Greater Accra), Mampong Demonstration School for the Deaf (Eastern), Sekondi School for the Deaf (Western), Ho School for the Deaf (Volta), and Cape Coast School for the Deaf (Central region).

As more students from the deaf schools graduated from basic educational programs, the need to train specialist teachers for the deaf and establish deaf schools (in each of the 10 [now 16] regions of Ghana) and a Senior High School (SHS) to accommodate students completing their basic education [primary and Junior High School (JHS)] became paramount. Therefore, a college called the Deaf Education Specialist Training School was established in 1965 as a department under the College of Special Education through the benevolent efforts of Ann Hewitt of the Commonwealth Society for the Deaf [30]. This led to the establishment of another department at the Akropong Presbyterian College of Education (APCE) during the 1974/1975 academic year, which provided specialist training for teachers in visual impairment education in such countries as Nigeria, Kenya, Swaziland, and the Gambia. These countries sent their students to train at this college [30]. It was not until the late 1990s that provisions were made for the first deaf person, Manasseh Kwasi Awudi, to gain admission to the Akropong College of Education for training as a teacher. Manasseh went on to graduate from the College of Education at Winneba with a Master's Degree in Special Education.

In 1975, two new schools, namely an SHS and Technical Institute, were established at Mampong-Akuapem and Bechem, respectively. The SHS at Mampong-Akuapem (in the Eastern region) offered general secondary education, in addition to technical and vocational courses, while the Technical Institute (in Bechem in the former Brong-Ahafo region) provided basic education and practical vocational training skills to deaf Primary and JHS graduates. Two additional new schools for the deaf (one in Kibi and the other in Koforidua, both in the Eastern Region of Ghana) were also established to provide basic education for deaf and deaf-blind students. This new deaf school establishment increased the number of deaf schools in the Eastern Region to four (one each at Kibi

and Koforidua and two others at Mampong). In 1992, the College of Special Education was upgraded and became part of the university complex at Winneba [30], which is presently known as the University of Education Winneba (UEW). It offers courses in sign language and special education and awards diplomas, Masters of Philosophy degrees, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. UEW has campuses at Winneba, Ashanti Mampong, and Kumasi.

The **Table 1** below provides a list of the seventeen schools (two integrated and fifteen special schools) providing educational services at the basic and secondary level for deaf children and adults in Ghana as of December 2018.

Ghana follows a 2-6-3-3-4 or 2-6-3-3-3 system of education, comprising 2 years of Kindergarten Education, 9 years of Basic Education [6 years Primary and 3 years Junior High School (JHS)], 3 years of SHS Education, and 4 years of University or 3 years of Technical University/College of Education/Nurses Training College Education. Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), mandated in Article 39 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, consists of six years at the primary level, three years at the JHS level, and three years at the SHS level.

The 2-6-3-3-4 or 2-6-3-3-3 system of education adopted in Ghana follows the mandate of the 1994 FCUBE Policy, which seeks to expand access to basic education, reduce school exclusions, promote effective teaching and learning, and ensure the timely supply of materials to schools.

Deaf schools in Ghana are under the management of the Special Education Division (SpED) Headquarters of the Ghana Education Services, and they follow the full Ghanaian basic education system, which consists of nursery school, primary school, and JHS. However, they have departments that offer vocational training courses for basic education graduates or students who prefer to learn trade skills in catering, hairdressing, masonry, block-making, metal-work, dressmaking, and carpentry. This provision considers the fact that not all deaf students are educable to the tertiary level because of the individual differences in abilities and capabilities and the severities of their disabilities, which, to some extent, affect their ability to attain standard proficiency in subjects such as mathematics and English language. Additionally, deaf students have an extra year added to the duration of their JHS and SHS education; this is a practice based on an unsubstantiated assumption that deaf students need more time to become prepared for tertiary education (a practice since the colonial days) even though there is no specific documented policy guiding this practice. Total communication (composed of sign language, sign-supported English, and spoken speech) is used for teaching and learning in all the deaf schools.

Despite the difference in the length of basic and secondary education between deaf and hearing students, deaf students study the same subjects as their hearing counterparts. However, they are exempted from studying Ghanaian languages and French at all levels of their education. According to the 2017 West African Examination Council timetable for the final Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE) [31] and the West Africa Senior High Schools Certificate Examinations (WASSCE), deaf students are allowed twice the stipulated exam time. This form of reasonable adjustment is also given to students at the colleges of education and at the university level, which the author had the privilege to access during exam periods during his college and university days.

Ghana has no national policy document on deaf education to

School	Year established	Type of School	Location
Demonstration School for the Deaf	1957 (relocated twice to the present site in 1967 and renamed in 1964).	Mixed Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School).	Mampong-Akuapem (Eastern Region).
State School for the Deaf	1965	Mixed Day and Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Accra (Greater Accra Region)
Wa School for the Deaf	1968	Mixed Day/Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Wa (Upper West Region)
Cape Coast School for the Deaf	1970	Mixed Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Cape Coast (Central Region)
Sekondi School for the Deaf Nchaban School for the Deaf	1971	Mixed Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Nchaban (Western Region)
Volta School for the Deaf	1971	Mixed Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Hohoe (Volta Region)
Senior High/Technical School for the Deaf	1975	Mixed Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Mampong-Akuapem (Eastern Region)
Kibi Unit School for the Deaf	1975	Mixed Public Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Kibi (Eastern Region)
Koforidua Unit School for the Deaf	1975	Mixed Public Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Koforidua (Eastern Region)
Bechem School for the Deaf	1975	Mixed Public Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary Junior High School and Technical Institute)	Bechem (Bono Region)
Ashanti School for the Deaf	1977	Mixed Public Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Jamasi (Ashanti Region)
Savelugu School for Deaf	1978	Mixed Public Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Savelugu (Northern Region)
Salvation Army School for the Deaf	1995	Mixed Public Day/Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Agona Swedru, (Central Region)
Gbeogo School for the Deaf	1996	Mixed Public Day/Boarding (Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School)	Tongo, Bolgatanga (Upper East Region)
House of Grace School for the deaf	2008	Mixed Private Day School (Kindergarten and Primary School)	Weija (Greater Accra)
Multi Kids Academy	2010	Mixed Private Day/Boarding Inclusive School	Legon, (Greater Accra)
St. John Integrated Technical Senior High School	2009	Integrated Mixed Public Day/Boarding	Navrongo (Northern Region)
*Village of Hope Integrated (Hope College) Senior High School	2012	Mixed Integrated Private Day/Boarding	Kasoa (Central Region)

Table 1: Administration, Teaching, and Learning in Schools for the Deaf in Ghana. (*Provides Ghanaian Sign Language (GhSL) tuition and learning as part of its school curriculum for the students and its led by Mr Samuel Asare, a deaf postgraduate teacher and Former National President of the Ghana National Association of the Deaf. So far, it is contributing positively towards the training of a new generation of upcoming GSL interpreters).

serve as a guide for recruitment, teaching, assessments, and learning in schools for the deaf, although the SpED Headquarters did have a policy statement on IE passed in 2015. However, the IE policy statement does not recognize the Ghana National Association of the Deaf (GNAD) and schools for the deaf as stakeholders with key responsibilities needed for successful implementation. This non-recognition of the organization representing deaf persons might be attributed to the limited collaboration between the two organizations, although most national deaf organizations are skeptical of IE because of the misconception that it will lead to the closure of schools for the deaf and render teachers of the deaf jobless. Consequently, deaf students are only able to access mainstream education at the tertiary level, because all the schools for the deaf in Ghana are segregated from the basic to the secondary levels.

The absence of a national policy document on deaf education also means that no legal principles guide the recruitment of teachers into schools for the deaf. Thus, teachers who are not skilled in Ghanaian Sign Language (GhSL) or who have no training in special or deaf education are often posted in schools for the deaf. Such staff postings negatively affect the quality of teaching because sign language is the official mode of communication used in deaf schools in Ghana. Despite Ghana having a National Disability Policy document formulated in 2000 that acknowledges the lack of adequate facilities for sign language

programs and the lack of access to oral information little have been done to ensure that the teaching of sign language in teacher training colleges is implemented. Thus far, the teaching and learning of sign language has not been a part of the standard curriculum for education programs even though the policy document was passed 17 years ago. While it is essential for teachers to be trained or skilled in the use of GhSL, its use in the classroom should be monitored and evaluated to ensure that deaf students are effectively learning and benefiting academically. This monitoring and evaluation is an area where the SpED has failed over the years. There has also been little research on the assessment of deaf students' sign language skills and competency.

Furthermore, the quality of teaching provided to deaf students in schools for the deaf is another issue of concern because most deaf schools have no classrooms with projectors to aid in teaching and learning. Most teachers must write everything on the white/blackboard or draw on paper, which makes the nature of the job tiring because they already use their hands to sign to the students, which affects their energy levels. Deaf students are visual learners [6], and, therefore, projectors are essential materials in deaf classrooms. Unfortunately, schools for the deaf in Ghana lack digital aids and equipment such as projectors, tablets, and electronic whiteboard projector screens. Hence, the quality of teaching and learning is at an average level.

Tertiary education for the deaf in Ghana: Most deaf SHS graduates in Ghana have narrowed their post-secondary education options to tertiary institutions that mainstream deaf students, mainly the Akropong Presbyterian University/College of Education (APCE) at Akropong-Akuapem, the University of Ghana, Legon (UG), the University of Education (UEW), the Winneba and Kumasi campuses, and the Institute of Education of the University of Cape Coast (UCC). This tertiary institutional preference among deaf senior high school graduates may be based on the belief that attending a university that is not associated with the deaf culture is a form of cultural exclusion [32].

The **Table 2** below provides a breakdown of tertiary education institutions that mainstream deaf students in Ghana as of December 2018.

Some challenges facing deaf education in Ghana

Political and leadership barriers/political interference in the Ghanaian educational system: Political interference has been a common feature of the educational system in Ghana since the introduction of educational reforms in 1987. This political interference is evident in the different educational policies that past and successive governments have pursued to address various shortcomings. For example, since 1991, the duration of secondary school (high school) has been three years under the National Democratic Congress (NDC) [33]. The SHS duration was changed to four years when the New Patriotic Party (NPP) assumed power in 2001. The four-year curriculum was reverted to three years when the NDC returned to power in 2009, and the current NPP government is considering reversing this back to four years. Aside from the curriculum duration controversy, re-assignments, transfers, demotions, and promotions are common transitional procedures that occur in various districts, in addition to the regional and national headquarters for the education ministry whenever there is a change of government.

Such political and educational policies and staff transitions have not enabled past governments to continue projects started by previous governments. As such, since the passage of the 2006 Disability Law, several provisions, such as free education at all levels for all persons with disabilities, are yet to be implemented. Furthermore, the IE agenda goals of 2015 that were piloted by the NPP government in 2002 have not been achieved after the NDC took over in 2009. It took them seven years to draw up a simple IE policy document in 2015 before losing power a year later. All of these political education ideologies and the transition have affected deaf education. There is currently no policy statement on deaf education in Ghana to serve as a framework. Aside from this, deaf students do not have access to integrated or mainstream education at the basic or secondary levels. This absence of policy highlights a lack of focus on disability-related policies and their implementation by past governments. For instance, on 17 August 2010, the Daily

Graphic Editorial reported that the Deputy Minister of Information, Mr Okudzeto Ablwaka (who was Deputy Minister of Education from 2012 to 2016) [34], acknowledged political interference within the education sector. He proposed that all the political parties in the country sign a memorandum of understanding to allow the education sector to be managed without any undue political interference for the next 25 years. The difference in political ideologies has led to the neglect of deaf education by past governments with only one SHS established in 1975 to service deaf students in a population of 29 million. No other government has ever thought of establishing another SHS in the country to improve access to secondary education for deaf students.

Ghana passed an Inclusive Education Policy Document and a National Disability Law in 2015 and 2006 [26], respectively, and participated as a signatory to the 1994 Salamanca Statement and the 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Despite these, the absence of political willpower in response to the implementation of disability laws and policies is a challenge to deaf education in Ghana. It hinders the implementation of IE provision for deaf students at the basic and secondary levels and the improvement of integrated and mainstream services at the tertiary level for deaf learners.

Funding: Funding is a challenge to improving access to deaf and IE for students in Ghana. According to [35], funding was a critical factor that hindered the nation in its inability to achieve its IE goals of 2015. Since 2007, when the NPP government allocated approximately 1% of the total budget of the education ministry to special education provisions (Ghana Education Sector Performance Monitoring Report, 2007) [36], the funding level has remained the same or below after they left power in 2009 and returned in 2017 [37].

It seems that past and successive governments since 2007 consider spending on students with disabilities as less beneficial, emphasizing other budgetary priorities. Before the December 2016 elections, the NPP, while in opposition, promised free SHS education for all qualifying JHS school graduates. Barely nine months after assuming power in January 2017, they passed and implemented the policy. They were timely in raising approximately Gh¢ 1.2 Billion (about \$2.7 million) in it 2018 budget in addition to the already Gh¢ 400 million (about \$90.5 million) spent on it in 2017 [38,39] to meet the expenses of 424,092 qualifying first-year students (Joy News, 4 September 2017) for the 2017/2018 academic year. The short interval which they used to make the funds available offers some indication of how political ideologies come first before disability-related law and its policy implementation. The free SHS policy that the current first-year students are enjoying is good and has provided an additional opportunity for an estimated 100,000 students from poor backgrounds to access SHS education (quoted by the President, Nana Addo Dankwa and reported by Joy News on 3 October 2017) [40]. However, from a disability rights

Tertiary Institutions	Some Examples of Courses/Qualifications Pursued by Deaf Students
Akropong Presbyterian University College (formerly Akropong Presbyterian College of Education/Presbyterian Training College (PTC).	Diploma in Basic Education (upgraded to Bachelor of Education for new students enrolling in the 2019/2020 academic year
University of Cape Coast (UCC)	Diploma in Basic Education; Bachelor of Basic Education; Master's degree (e.g. in ICT, Guidance and Counseling).
The University of Education, (UEW) (Winneba and Kumasi Campuses)	Bachelor's Degrees in Special Education, ICT, Graphic Design, Engineering; BSc. Degrees in Building and Construction; Catering and Hospitality; Master's degree in Special Education
University of Ghana, Legon (Includes the social of social work)	Diploma in Social Work; Bachelor's Degree in Political Science.
Koforidua Technical University (Formerly Koforidua Polytechnic)	Degree, Diploma and Certificate Course in Catering, Metalwork, Building and Construction
Takoradi Technical University (Formerly Takoradi Polytechnic)	Degree, Diploma and Certificate Course in Catering, Metalwork, Building and construction

Table 2: Tertiary Education for the Deaf in Ghana.

perspective, the free SHS education policy might appear like a political promise, implemented to fulfill a part of a general election campaign manifesto when compared to providing free education funding for all the qualifying disabled students to the tertiary level, which is yet to be implemented since 2006. It is a political promise because it is being fulfilled as a show of appreciation to party supporters and Ghanaians for their party's (NPP) 2016 election victory. A comparison of the more than 420,000 students enjoying free SHS to the estimated 7,607 children with disabilities enrolled in special and integrated schools at the basic and SHS levels in Ghana revealed that very few qualify to enter tertiary institutions each year. These 7,607 disabled students in the Primary, JHS, and SHS make up just 1.7% of the total 424,092 first-year students enjoying free SHS for the 2017/2018 academic year. Considering the vast amount of money spent on the free SHS education policy, it can, therefore, be deduced that making funds available to execute tasks related to disabilities was not a priority for the past governments. Hence, implementing disability laws, such as those that provide free education at all levels for persons with disabilities (including the deaf), is a possibility ignored by the past and successive governments because of the funding priorities. Nevertheless, the free SHS policy already implemented is historical and a highly commendable IE access and poverty reduction initiative executed by the present government.

Aside from the past and present political apathy of making funds available to execute disability-related projects, low or inadequate funding allocation to special education affects infrastructure and human resource development. Such funding priorities have affected deaf education, which has seen a significant decline in enrolment [40]. For example, in 2015, out of the Gh¢ 7 billion (about \$ 1.56 Billion) allocated to the Education Ministry, only 0.4% was allotted to SpED [41,42]. This low budgetary allocation has not made it possible for the SpED to even afford an official website nor to use web-based domain e-mail as a link to the global business world. Only one public school for the deaf (the State School for the Deaf) has an official website. This low budgetary allocation poses a challenge in terms of information access because parents of deaf children find it challenging to access information on schools for the deaf, their location, address, vocational and general programs offered, and other relevant information. It has also affected the international reputation of special schools in Ghana and the ability of the SpED to attract prospective sponsors or donors.

Availability of funding not only affects the administration of special education provisions but also impacts deaf education at all levels. For example, at the basic education level, Opoku, Agbenyega, et al. [43] found that inadequate funding impedes the execution of inclusive pilot schools' programs; an issue which officials of SpED have admitted affects the proper coordination of the program and calls for a re-start. This funding obstacle affects deaf education because deaf students cannot access mainstream education at the basic and secondary levels. Lack of funds has not made it possible to train and equip general basic school teachers with the requisite skills for inclusive pilot programs, an issue which has prompted officials of SpED to make plans for a re-start of the program [43]. This funding challenge was, for instance, publicly admitted by the education minister, Dr Mathew Prempeh, in November 2017 in a statement that was quoted widely; he said that the previous government that lost the 2016 general elections left behind debts and unpaid grants for special schools totaling GH¢4.7 million (about \$1.01 million...Daily Guide Africa, 2017) [44].

Similarly, at the tertiary levels, a lack of funds has made it impossible to train or recruit qualified persons to work as note-takers or learning support assistants for deaf students. In a phenomenological study

conducted at UEW, Ghana, Oppong et al. [45] used semi-structured interviews to explore the lived academic experiences of 14 deaf students in the age group of 22-28 years. The results of the thematic coding and analysis showed that there were insufficient GhSL Interpreters and note-takers to help deaf students have equal access to the curricula at the university. Although Oppong et al.'s study did not specifically focus on the financial barriers affecting the students or the institution, the absence of note-takers and insufficient GhSL Interpreters at UEW offers some indirect indication that funding to recruit more GhSL Interpreters and note-takers to assist the deaf students in class during lectures might be an issue. However, not only does UEW not have note-takers for deaf students, but the situation is also the same in all the tertiary institutions where deaf students enroll. Hence, deaf students at the tertiary level only have access to sign language interpreters in classrooms and rely on their peer's notes to copy at the end of the lectures. It deprives them of access to note-takers and disadvantages them as they cannot gaze at the sign language interpreter and write notes at the same time. This disadvantage is because they will miss out on what the sign language interpreter is signing should they attempt to bend their heads to write down notes.

Furthermore, 1:1 support assistance for the deaf is unavailable. Some deaf students, therefore, buy pamphlets sold by lecturers and course departments, which are sometimes difficult for them to understand and do not help to identify the salient points raised in class. Purchasing pamphlets, aside from other academic papers and books, in addition to paying full fees at the tertiary levels contributes to making higher education access costly for the deaf students in Ghana.

Inadequate emphasis on research: In developed countries, such as the USA and the UK, more attention is being paid to helping deaf children diagnosed at an early age improve upon their functional language development skills through medical advancements such as cochlear implants and research. For example, through an emphasis on research in the UK, it is known that there are 45,631 deaf children in England out of which 7% have at least one cochlear implant. Again, 4% of the estimated number of children has a bone conduction device, 14% uses an additional spoken language other than English at home, and 79% chooses further education as the most common post-school path (UK Consortium for Research in Deaf Education [CRIDE], 2017). These documented statistics on deaf children in the UK can be attributed to the massive expenditure that the government spends on educational and social research, medical and technological advancement, language, speech therapy, and other support services and interventions to identify and prevent disability at an early age. Early identification and interventions for disabilities are crucial, and the World Health Organization report (2011) emphasizes that approximately 70% of the disabilities in Sub-Saharan Africa are preventable [46]. In comparison, the statistical data on deaf children are lacking in Ghana and span across other disability areas, such as autism spectrum disorders, mental retardation, and visual impairment. Thus, there is a scarcity of literature and statistical data on disabled persons. Ghana does not have sufficient statistical information on its deaf population, nor does it place serious emphasis on disability research because public and private institutions and organizations perceive spending on non-disabled students as more beneficial than spending on those with special needs.

The absence of statistical data on the deaf populace in Ghana may be because Ghana, like most of the developing African countries, does not place any emphasis on the research on persons with disabilities, such as the deaf. Moreover, some tertiary institutions such as the UEW, UG, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology

(KNUST), and Lancaster University, Ghana (LUG), organize disability-related conferences and have departments that offer courses in special education (UEW), disability and rehabilitation studies (KNUST), and sign language (UEW, UCC, UG, and LUG). However, there are no tertiary institutions in the country that have a research centre dedicated to disability research related to deaf education.

Large class sizes: Large class sizes are a challenge facing deaf education in Ghana. With a population of 29 million, 13 basic public deaf schools, and 1 SHS for the deaf in Ghana, large class sizes due to overcrowding impact the effectiveness of teaching and learning. This immense class size challenge facing deaf schools in Ghana has been reported in the local media in the absence of limited research evidence. On 21 March 2017, Citi FM News reported that more than 100 students seeking admission to the Koforidua School for the Deaf in the eastern region of Ghana were on a waiting list because of the lack of adequate facilities and infrastructure to accommodate them, along with more than 230 students enrolled in the deaf school in the community [47]. Additionally, the Ghana News Agency (GNA) reported that in Kumasi, a class meant for 15 pupils at the Jamasi School for the Deaf was forced to accommodate 45 students, while a room designed for 10 three-in-one beds contained approximately 20 beds because of the lack of classrooms and infrastructure to accommodate the more than 595 deaf students enrolled in the school [48].

Absence of feasible legislative policy on deaf education: Ghana has no national policy on deaf education, and hence, bilingual education cannot be started even if IE is implemented. The IE policy document of 2015 failed to consider drafting national policies on deaf, autistic, or intellectually or visually impaired education before finalizing the document. This absence of disability-specific policy documents could be attributed to the education ministry's oversight of not taking time to engage in sufficient consultation with stakeholders to draft individual policy documents and statements for the education of this cohort (the deaf, autistic, and intellectually or visually impaired). A planned policy document each for the education of the deaf, autistic, and intellectual and visually impaired will provide a clear guideline on recruitments, teaching, learning, assessment, etc. in schools within the various disability discipline areas. This oversight exposes deficits in the IE policy statement passed in 2015, showing that it lacks clarity in terms of the nation's stance and vision on deaf and other disability-related education. It also does not explain how these positions will be coordinated to effectively achieve future targets set out for inclusive education in the policy statement.

The content of the 2015 IE policy document even failed to explain the meaning of the words 'sign language' in its glossary of terms on page 18, although the word 'braille' was explained. This omission shows the extent to which the needs of deaf students are not thought of by the education ministry in policy documents. It highlights the absence of national policy guiding deaf education and a curriculum that needs adjustment to make it barrier-free for deaf learners.

The absence of a clearly defined and stated policy statement for deaf education in Ghana has affected the quality of the staff posted to special schools; planning, monitoring, data collection, training, and re-training of special needs teachers; social mobilization; improved infrastructural facilities; improved funding; and school administration and management guidelines in deaf schools. The Ghana Education Ministry at the various regional and district levels is also guilty of posting and

transferring teachers, who do not have degrees or certificates in Special Education Needs (SEN) nor voluntary or teaching experience in SEN or deaf schools, to schools for the deaf.

This recruitment lapse in the absence of a comprehensive deaf education policy framework document may be attributed to inadequate collaborations between the SpED and the various public higher education institutions, which offer courses in disability studies and special education. It results in the posting or recruitment of staffs not skilled in GhSL in schools for the deaf. It affects deaf students' educational progress to the tertiary level because many of them are unable to pass their basic and secondary education exams as a result of being taught by teachers less skilled in GhSL. Moreover, some deaf people do not consider themselves as lacking hearing or disabled but emphasize on inclusion through sign language. This sign language inclusion emphasis is to create positive deaf identities, a common language, cultural heritage, and life experiences [49]. Hence, the absence of deaf culture within an educational setting due to non-bilingual education caused by non-teaching or the learning of sign language poses a barrier to a deaf student's educational progress to the tertiary level. Hence, the teaching and/or learning of sign language could be considered an optional or compulsory subject in future curriculums at all levels of education in Ghana.

Inadequate skilled sign language interpreters: The absence of a comprehensive policy framework on deaf education has led to a lack of clarity as to what role sign language must play in providing integrated, mainstream, and inclusive education for deaf students at all levels. The Ghana Education Ministry's 2015 Standards and Guidelines for the practice of IE identified access in the form of the provision of walkways, paths, roads, buildings, doors, doorways stairways, handrails, water closets, toilet compartments, grandness, and ramps for school buildings as necessary provisions needed in inclusive schools [40]. It is surprising that it failed to mention or include access to sign language or deaf culture in its standard guidelines.

The omission of sign language access in the 2015 Standards and Guidelines for the practice of Inclusive Education in Ghana's Policy document as a form of IE access makes the policy document appear to be specifically designed to suit the needs of the physically challenged only. Although it did mention that teachers are to use various approaches and strategies, such as sign language for communication to enhance teaching, it failed to emphasize the teaching and learning of sign language as an optional or compulsory part of the curriculum of inclusive targeted schools.

Presently, there are only 13 basic and 1 SHS for the deaf in Ghana [50]. Integrated and mainstream education is not accessible at the SHS level, as most of the inclusive pilot programmers target basic schools. Although there is an integrated secondary school in Navrongo, it is not inclusive, and many deaf students prefer the SHS for the deaf because of the inadequately skilled sign language interpreters. Hence, very few JHS graduates are admitted each year into the SHS because of the lack of facilities and infrastructure [51]. Consequently, deaf persons in Ghana generally have limited access to formal basic and post-basic education because regular schools are not accessible to deaf persons on a mainstream basis. This is because there are few qualified and skilled sign language interpreters in Ghana who can be assigned to SHS to interpret for deaf students.

At the basic level, most teachers in mainstream schools cannot sign [52] because of the absence of sign language tuition, and the

opportunity to learn it at all levels in the education curriculum. Similarly, at the tertiary level, the qualification and competencies of GhSL Interpreters is a deaf education challenge. [45] Opong et al. used a descriptive survey to explore the perception of 23 deaf students of UEW, Ghana, on the quality of sign language interpretation that they access. Using a 15-item Likert scale questionnaire, they found out that the students had concerns about the professional competencies of their GhSL Interpreters' and found the quality of the interpretation service to be unsatisfactory. However, their study failed to provide background information on the educational level and qualifications of the GhSL Interpreters employed by the university, which would have provided insight into whether qualified or unqualified interpreters were used. They also did not conduct follow-up interviews to ascertain why the students regarded their interpreters as unprofessional. Nevertheless, their study highlighted the nature of sign language interpretation support provided to and the barriers facing the deaf students at the HE level in Ghana.

Discussion

Dr Andrew Foster pioneered deaf education in Africa, spending more than two decades on the continent and helping to establish a reported 36 schools for the deaf in 13 African countries (several of which closed down due to war, political unrest, etc.). The only remaining SHS for the deaf that Foster helped to establish in 1975 still admits deaf students in Ghana. However, it is unfortunate that his legacy has been forgotten and his immense contribution to deaf education in Ghana and Africa has not been eulogized. The Ghanaian educational system must put into place measures to give recognition to the legendary work of Foster. At the very least, a narrative of parts of Foster's autobiography could be included in some English language textbooks as comprehension passages. The government, schools for the deaf (for example, the school founded by Foster) [12], and higher education institutions offering Disability, Special Education, and Sign Language-related courses) could also consider renaming specific buildings, such as dormitories, libraries, assembly and dining halls, roads, and public buildings after Foster to honor and in remembrance of his legacy. This renaming is suggested as, currently, there is no building, school, or hall named after him and neither is there a plaque of his status. Foster's autobiography could also be made a focus of the library curricula in schools for the deaf. Foster's work and legacy deserve to be eulogized in Ghana and across the African continent. He was a great role model whose 30 years of missionary work in Africa was longer than that of several volunteers or missionaries in Africa. He brought smiles, hope, careers, and futures to the lives of the deaf across Africa. He is a legendary hero whose efforts will forever remain an unforgotten legacy in the history of deaf education in Ghana and across Africa. His memory and efforts, therefore, deserve proper recognition by countries and deaf associations in Ghana and Africa.

The previous paragraphs highlighted the implication of Foster's contribution to deaf education and the need to eulogize him to inspire the upcoming future generation of the youth. Growing up as a child, I did not have the privilege to attend any of the schools for the deaf in Ghana because of the scarcity of information about them. After completing SHS in an integrated setting, I visited the SpED headquarters to seek consultation on the tertiary education opportunities available for deaf persons. The first time I arrived at the SpED office, I paused and asked myself, 'How can a blind or physically challenged person access this building?'. I made this observation after noticing that the office was on the top floor and the building had no lift or disability passage. Hence,

a visitor must climb two flights of stairs to the building floor before entering into the head office. It has been over a decade since my first visit to the SpED headquarters, but it is surprising to note that it is still housed in the same old disability-inaccessible building about 9 km away from the Ghana Education Service's head office in Accra. The office needs immediate relocation to a more disability-friendly building as a start to status redemption.

The challenges that SpED faces are not only related to the accessibility of its building. They are numerous and will be discussed in a different article in the future. Hence, I am not going to give a personal perspective on deaf education in Ghana as a deaf scholar. However, I argue that the absence of a national policy on deaf education, the non-inclusion of sign language as part of the curriculum in teacher training colleges and basic and secondary schools and the absence of mainstream education at the basic and secondary level for deaf students are setbacks inhibiting the progress of deaf education in Ghana. A national policy on deaf education will offer insights and serve as a guide for recruitment, assessment, syllabus content, teaching, and learning to provide a means to help achieve IE goals for deaf students in Ghana. For mainstream education, free SHS is a good step towards providing the means to start a pilot IE program for deaf students at the SHS level. This pilot IE program for deaf students will mean that GhSL Interpreters and note-takers must be recruited to provide access for deaf students whose parents wish them to attend hearing schools. These changes are possible if there is a political will.

Political will has the ability to influence the implementation of policies with statutory laws in place. For example, the implementation of the free SHS had a political will factor. By political will, this implies policies enacted on the basis of the political promises made during the election. Naatogmah [53], GhanaWeb and Peacefmonline [54] in early December 2017 reported that Ghana's Vice President, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, responded to critics calling for the free SHS to be backed by law by stating that the policy does not need legal backing in a speech delivered at Tamale Senior High School's (Tamasco) 23rd Speech and Prize-Giving Say. Dr Bawumia stated that:

"Free senior high school education does not have to be backed by law to be funded. What are required is commitment and the political will to make sure that the budgetary resources are made available to support it. We are covering everybody, and we are making the budgetary provision for it" [55].

He further cited the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) and the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). Although backed by law, these have often been ineffective because of a lack of funds. He also said that any government committed to developing the human resource of its citizens would show this commitment by making the supporting funds available.

This statement from the Vice President offers an indication that can be used to debate why certain provisions in the Disability Act 715 concerning the provision of free education at all levels for disabled persons, training sign language interpreters, and other entitlements are yet to be implemented. Therefore, a lack of funds has made it difficult for specific provisions needed to make the social model of disability more effective in Ghana.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I argue that the medical model of disability in Ghana

is dependent on political will and funding, which makes it difficult to implement the provisions in the 2006 Disability Law, and the Inclusive Education policy document is harming the social model of disability. As a concerned deaf scholar, I have raised the above-discussed points on the basis of my personal experiences as a deaf educator (and a former volunteer within the deaf community), observations, and perspectives on deaf education in Ghana. To address or mitigate the problems facing deaf education in Ghana, there is a need for dialogue on some of the discussed challenges with a wide range of stakeholders (including teachers in the schools for the deaf), for making adequate funds available, and for taking action toward their implementation to ensure that deaf education, including its access, teaching, learning, and pedagogies, is improved upon. The government may be justifiably spending large amounts of money on free SHS, but it should try to introduce a pilot IE program at the SHS level and provide free education to all disabled students moving to tertiary institutions in Ghana.

Limitations

The opinions and conclusions expressed in this article, unless referenced, are those of the author and do not represent a generalized view of deaf education nor the deaf community in Ghana.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that he has no conflict of interest.

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